



THE SUNDAY TIMES
**T Best Places
to Work 2023**
VERY BIG COMPANY

THE SUNDAY TIMES
**T Best Places
to Work 2025**
VERY BIG ORGANISATION

Health and Wellbeing at Oxleas

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Improving lives

we're **kind** we're **fair** we **listen** we **care**

About Oxleas

Improving lives

- We provide NHS services in South London, Kent and the South West for Bristol, Devon and Dorset, taking care of the whole person - body and mind.
- We provide a wide range of health and social care services in South East London, specialising in community health, mental health and learning disability services.
- We work at around 100 health sites including prisons as well as in local schools, children's centres and, of course, in people's homes.
- We have approx. 4,700 members of staff.



Context

End of 2020/21

20% Turnover - Losing more staff per month than we were hiring.

£7m spent on Agency Costs (3.34% of total paybill).

NHSE/I data – 93,806 registered vacancies in NHS.

Chronic national shortage (38,952 unfilled Nursing vacancies, 9,691 Medical vacancies).

Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on people's mental and physical health, as well as highlighting health inequalities from social factors.

Oxleas Strategy 2021/24

Engagement with staff, service users and carers, staff networks, partners organisations.

Surveys, events, focus groups. 1000+ staff and 500+ service users participated.

Priorities;

1. Zero delays
2. Great out of hospital care
3. Making Oxleas a Great Place to Work – Wellbeing, Kindness and Respect.

Our Strategy 2024-27

Our Strategy 2024-27



Our purpose:

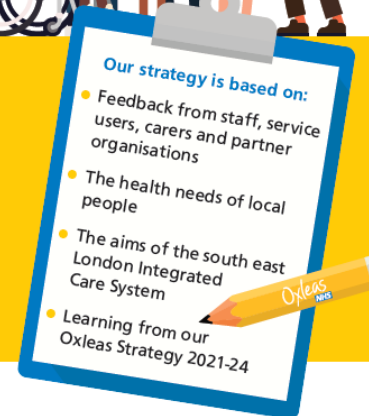
Our purpose is to improve lives by providing the best possible care to our patients and their families.

Improving lives



Our values:

we're **kind** we're **fair**
we **listen** we **care**



Our three big priorities:

1 Great **care** **2** Timely **care** **3** Best **PLACE TO WORK**

We're kind

We show
consideration,
concern and
thoughtfulness
towards everyone

We listen

We put our people in the
driving seat.
We truly listen to our
people to find lasting
solutions that work



We're fair

We're passionate about
inclusion.
We embrace difference
and we're tackling 'the
snowy white peaks' and
more.

We care

We have made a
positive impact on
staff wellbeing –
almost 11%
improvement

Why does Oxleas care so much about staff wellbeing?



1 We can only provide the outstanding care our patients deserve if we can attract and keep staff who feel valued, cared for and included.

2 We are facing unprecedented demands for our services, significant staff shortages, and increasing financial challenges.

3 We have committed to make staff experience our **USP**. Our brilliant people are at the very heart of our Oxleas strategy. We might not be able to compete on pay, and the High Cost Area Supplement system works against us – but we want to be known as the place to work for excellent staff experience.

There is more we want to do, but we are making great progress!

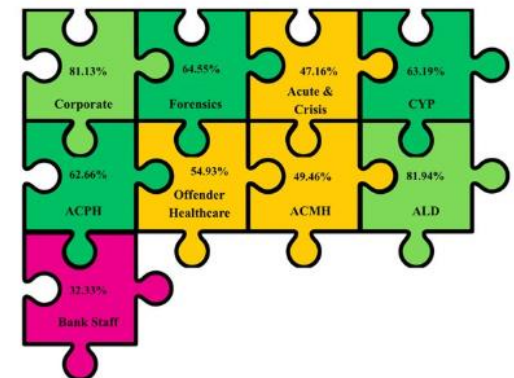
NHS Staff Survey Scores

In 2024, we:

- Improved our health and wellbeing score from 6.45 to 6.48
- Saw a reduction in our burnout score from 26.78 to 24.84%.
- Achieved our highest response rate to date - 60%
- Achieved our highest bank staff response rate to date – 32%.

Survey participation tips:

- Early promotion with a good communications plan
- Ensure managers are on board
- Use stakeholders to champion the survey
- Provide time and space to participate
- Address any confidentiality myths
- Why it matters/Why participate? Drives our action plan, supports our decision making and to put our wellbeing agenda into action
- Share how it links in with Trust Strategy & Values
- Create an incentive plan – Team Staff Survey Challenge.



We're making a positive impact

1. Our Wellbeing scores improved by almost **11%** in our 2022 Staff Survey.
2. Our staff reported more positive experiences than average in every People Promise theme in 2023, with staff engagement, morale, teamwork and line management scores being especially high.
3. We continued to make further improvements in 2024 for morale, 'we are safe and healthy' and 'we are always learning'.
4. 76% of staff would recommend Oxleas as a place to work in 2024 – **second highest** Mental Health, Learning Disability & Community Trust in **England**.
5. We were top in five out of nine categories across all 35 NHS Trusts in London – making us the **best Trust to work for in London**.
6. HSJ Trust of the Year 2023
7. Shortlisted for HSJ Wellbeing award (2023) and HPMA Wellbeing Award (2024)
8. Our turnover is now at **16%** and our vacancy rate is **8.5%** - much lower than our peer trusts. This is so much better for patients.

How have we maintained our Wellbeing scores?

Our **‘Your Wellbeing Matters’ programme** is a recognised brand within Oxleas. It was launched following the COVID-19 pandemic as a cause of action to take a holistic approach to prioritising and fostering employee wellbeing as a core enabler for organisational performance.

The programme has contributed to maintaining our wellbeing scores and supporting **burnout prevention**:

- Successful wellbeing campaigns and activities: visits, resources, feedback, activities including virtual walks, healthy eating offers and wellbeing boxes sent home
- Creation of our staff wellbeing hub - holistic resources, offers and support all in one place
- Creation of our ‘Your Wellbeing Matters’ podcast to reach more colleagues



We put our people in the driving seat!

- We have more than 100 **Wellbeing Champions** as well as a large group of **Professional Nurse Advocates** who are committed to supporting staff wellbeing, signposting to the wealth of resources available and facilitating Wellbeing Weeks.
- We listen to staff at Schwartz Rounds, hold **listening sessions** on challenging issues and we invite them to help us design better processes.
- Our **thriving Staff Networks** are given a dedicated budget.
- We are committed to supporting **the Armed Forces Community**
- Our **Directorate Staff Assemblies** are given funds for local wellbeing initiatives. They've organised walking challenges, wellbeing picnics, massage chairs, picnic tables, celebrations and much more. This allows a stronger employee voice.
- We have a central budget for **Reasonable Adjustments**, staff have Health and Wellbeing passports and we offer Disability Leave.
- Staff helped us design support for the **cost-of-living** crisis. They can access their salary as they earn and rent out their spare room to NHS colleagues.

Initiatives making an impact: Shadow Executive

- In its 3rd cohort, our innovative Shadow Executive goes from strength to strength
- 12 members of staff, reflecting the breadth and richness of Oxleas, bring challenge, fresh-thinking and insight to our Executive decision-making
- Members access all our Exec papers, then meet with the CEO and Exec Directors before each Formal Executive to bring challenge and ideas
- The impact has been tremendous – tackles potential group-think about wellbeing, sustainability, equalities, communications and much more. **Winner of the 2022 national ENEI award for Innovation in Inclusion.**
- Leading the way, we have been invited to share our approach with:



We're passionate about inclusion!

For the last four years, we have been working intensively on inclusion.

By listening to our staff, we have focused on things that will make a difference:

- Improving **cultural competence**, through our powerful in-house micro-aggressions film, bespoke training on gaslighting, being comfortable being uncomfortable about race, powerful films from LGBTQ+ staff to demystify.
- Creating **fairer progression** – introducing diverse recruitment panels, leadership training for BAME staff who feel they've got stuck, fairer recruitment processes, 'Breaking the Band 7 ceiling' career chats and more.
- Dedicated **networks and groups** for mental health, for neurodiversity, for menopause, childless-not-by-choice and much more.
- Fantastic celebration at **Pride** each year.



Co-designed with volunteers from our staff groups, we have held interactive panel sessions on;

- How to smash your Job Application
- How to smash it at Interview
- How to smash it after a Setback
- Helping Others to smash it
- Smashing it as a Leader
- Imposter Syndrome – Overcoming self-doubt
- People-Pleasing and Career Growth
- Public Speaking – Finding your voice
- Authenticity at work - How to be yourself and succeed
- Making the most of your Career Conversations
- Thriving as a Neurodivergent professional.



Achievements

1. Our Board reflects our staff group and local communities - **44%** of our Executive Board members are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, **13%** have a disability.
2. Recognised by the Sunday Times 2023 as **the Best Place to Work** for people with a **disability** as well as being listed in the **Best Places to Work** for very big organisations in **2023 and 2025**.
3. BAME/White staff **equally** likely to be shortlisted and appointed
4. Disabled candidates are **more likely** to be appointed.
5. Winner of the national **HPMA Award 2022** for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
6. Representation gap significantly **narrowing** at all senior levels
7. Of the voting Executive Directors on our Board, **57%** are women
8. Fantastic **Black Chief Exec**: HSJ Top 50 CEOs.



Overcoming challenges

- **Engagement:** in our hard-to-reach areas e.g. staff in prisons and remote workers
 - ✓ We have overcome this by using social media, sending information to home addresses, wellbeing boxes & placing engaged wellbeing champions in hard-to-reach areas.
- **Capacity:** We rely on the goodwill of our staff in voluntary roles to drive the wellbeing agenda and activity. We recognise staff are busy and therefore find it challenging to commit their time.
 - ✓ In response to this we have built in protected time as part of the terms of reference ensuring individuals and managers dedicate time to fulfil the role to support Trust objectives.
- **Funding & budget constraints:** Similar to other Trusts - to meet the challenges ahead, we need to think differently
 - ✓ We have been utilising external work perks, sample providers and the skills and hobbies of our own staff to continue building on our successful wellbeing initiatives.



Staff Engagement

- Leaders are invited to attend the **Senior Staff Event** to discuss key issues and developments. Messages are then cascaded within the wider teams,
- A weekly e-bulletin **One Oxleas** updates staff on key developments,
- A fortnightly **Best Place to Work** e-bulletin provides information about development opportunities, how staff can take their career forward and key dates for wellbeing activities,
- Regular **Oxwide** broadcasts showcase services and developments around the organisation and highlights key issues,
- Monthly **Team Briefings** provide updates from the Executive Team,
- Our intranet pages are updated and curated on a daily basis,
- Regular drop-in **'listening' sessions** to ensure staff members have space to ask questions, share their concerns and develop a supportive network,
- **Schwartz Rounds** help colleagues have open and supportive conversations about the emotional impact of providing healthcare,
- Staff can raise concerns through our independent **Freedom to Speak Up Guardians**,
- Directors, including Non-Executive Directors regularly spend time with colleagues in our services, providing the opportunity to find out more about the **issues that matter most to our frontline staff**,
- Our Head of Staff Partnership holds regular **focus groups** and feedback sessions for staff in their bases.

Commitment to Wellbeing at all levels



Nina Hingorani-Crain

Independent Non-Executive Director
Chair of Oxleas People Committee

Staff wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do meaning it is ever-evolving and influences longevity

“The last couple of years have seen a storm of pressures on staff wellbeing - the cost-of-living crisis, the impact on mental health of the pandemic and recovering services against the most challenging backdrop in NHS history, and the start of an important journey towards genuine equity and inclusion in our diverse workplaces.

I am deeply proud of how Oxleas has shown its commitment to supporting our people throughout - from delivering wellbeing packages to their homes, to the tireless work of our staff networks in engaging colleagues to design our award-winning EDI initiatives, to our innovative "financial health" partnerships, and workshops on important life transitions including menopause.

From our Wellbeing Champions to our Staff Assemblies, from the Executive to the Board, this will remain an important area of focus across Oxleas.”

A tiny sample of the lovely feedback

An Oxleas **clinician** commented on social media – “Thank you, Ify and the board for the love and care that you have shown.
#Wellbeing #Thankful #OxleasNHS”

One of our **wellbeing champions** said: “I find the role really rewarding. It gives me a platform to ensure wellbeing is on everyone's agenda and being prioritised.
We are all busy and some staff are not aware of the fantastic wealth of wellbeing support and resources on our HWB hub and it's our job to get this out there! Look out for us in our HWB t-shirts!”

An Oxleas **psychiatrist** commented on twitter: “This morning left me in awe. My employer Oxleas delivered a [Wellbeing] box as an immense show of respect, support and admiration. In my 19 years with the NHS, I’ve never felt such heartfelt appreciation.”

One of our **BAMEx network** staff said: “Things are starting to feel different here – we’re talking about race and equity in a way we didn’t before. I feel properly listened to.”

What's next for Oxleas

- Focus on creating healthy and strong teams – developing strong leaders through career development, coaching, apprenticeships, leadership programmes, team dynamics
- Staff burnout prevention and intervention programme
- Suicide Prevention toolkits for managers
- Kindness and Compassion Programme - taking time to pause
- Staff health checks – OH, heart health
- Supporting staff when they need us most – post incident support, sexual safety, domestic violence, bereavements
- Experience Based Co-design for our most challenging processes – complaints / SUIs / HR investigations
- Retention focus
- Wellbeing on wheels
- Developing green/blue spaces.



Top take away

Improving lives

As a trust providing mental and community physical health services, we do not rely on equipment or surgical tools to deliver care—it is the values, compassion, resilience, and skill of our incredible staff that makes the difference.

Our staff are our greatest asset - that is why investing in their wellbeing is not optional—it is essential.

‘We Listen’ – we bring this value to life by interacting with staff and putting them in the driving seat. Listening to the employee voice is key to fostering a thriving wellbeing culture.



we **listen**

THANK
YOU

We hope you got a taste for how passionate we are about making a positive and lasting impact on staff wellbeing in Oxleas.

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